

Inc. Village of Floral Park
July 16, 2019
Board of Trustees Meeting

Locust Street – Trustee Kevin Fitzgerald

Trustee Fitzgerald reported that the final phase of road reconstruction from Miller to Vandewater Avenues will commence next week. Last Monday, Mayor Longobardi, Trustee Chiara, Village Administrator Bambrick, Deputy Superintendent of Public Works Ginanne along with the engineer from D&B and representatives from the contractor met with residents on the block. They discussed timelines, an overview of the particulars of the project, along with ways the Village and contractor will be working with the residents to minimize any inconveniences during the life of the project which will be completed before school opens.

Belmont - Trustee Kevin Fitzgerald

Trustee Fitzgerald reported on a few items on this topic:

- First and foremost, Trustee Fitzgerald thanked all the residents that took time out of their day to attend the ESD Board meeting in Manhattan last Monday afternoon along with Mayor Longobardi, Trustee Pombonyo and Village Administrator Bambrick. As always, we had a significant showing in which all of our residents raised legitimate concerns about the project. On behalf of our residents, Trustee Fitzgerald thanked those attending for their efforts. The meeting can be viewed at the ESD's website; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OkPRVIGgkzk&feature=youtu.be>
- Although the ESD listened to Floral Park's and others' comments for almost three hours, they did approve the release of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) which can be found at <https://esd.ny.gov/belmont-park-redevelopment-project-feis>;
- It is important to note that this is not the final step in the process. The ESD still has to accept the findings in the FEIS. To that end, public comment on the FEIS is being accepted by the ESD; however, comments must be submitted by 12:00 noon on July 23, 2019. Additional approvals are also needed from the Franchise Oversight Board and the Public Authorities Control Board;
- As the FEIS is north of 8,000 pages long and the time allotted to review it is extremely short, Trustee Fitzgerald suggested residents review the document to see if the comments/questions that they submitted during the DEIS phase have been answered. If they have not been answered to your satisfaction, you should submit additional comments/questions;
- Based on his initial review of key chapters such as Project Description, Transportation, Mitigation, and Response to Public Comments, Trustee Fitzgerald said there are still significant concerns/questions that have not been addressed including many regarding the announced new train station that will abut the north lot and Floral Park-Bellerose School;
- With regards to last week's meeting, here are some comments:

- The ESD in their presentation mentioned that 83% of the letters that they received were “form letters”. Trustee Fitzgerald said he finds this objectionable that they would characterize our residents’ physically signed letters in this manner and potentially try to delegitimize them. Trustee Fitzgerald said he mentioned at the ESD Board meeting that these letters were physically signed and not produced by a “bot” or an online survey and should not be discounted in any way;
- They listed the number of meetings that they held with community groups including various groups in Floral Park. Although meetings were held, it is apparent that most of the significant concerns that were raised were not addressed and, in fact, the ESD has used those meetings to expand the project. For example, when we met with the ESD, NYI and NYAP and gave them a tour over a year ago, we specifically listed any use of the north lot would be a major concern to us. At the time of that meeting, the use of the north lot was not being contemplated while now it is being fully utilized including a train station and bus loop against the fence of the school along with a minimal buffer being provided to the school and residents;
- The final speaker at the ESD meeting on Monday was the NYI head of business operations. When he spoke, he mentioned that due to community input, the ESD has taken a good project and made it great. Trustee Fitzgerald respectively disagrees with that comment and urges any elected official, state agency or any member of the project team to meet with us to explain how our significant concerns were or will be alleviated.
- Lastly, at this time, the Village Board, Administration, Belmont Task Force and our outside counsel, Beveridge and Diamond, are reviewing the FEIS and will submit comments and weigh all options available to us.

CREW – Trustee Lynn Pombonyo

Before giving her report, Trustee Pombonyo thanked Trustee Fitzgerald and the Belmont Task Force for all their hard work in researching and addressing the issues regarding the Belmont Redevelopment which could potentially have a serious impact on the Village and our schools.

Trustee Pombonyo provided an update on CREW, the Coalition of Resources for Education and Wellness, a committee created by the Mayor and Village Board and chaired by Floral Park resident and community leader Elaine Licari. CREW is dedicated to supporting students and residents by providing resources and opportunities to promote wellness and positive life experiences. This summer, CREW is sponsoring and coordinating opportunities for our secondary school students to volunteer their talent and time, working alongside staff and fellow volunteers for our local not-for-profit organizations: the Hance Family Foundation, the Our Lady of Victory Food Pantry and, shortly, the Floral Park Conservation Society at Centennial Gardens. Thus far, twenty-seven students have signed up to participate. Thanks to all our student volunteers and our three local not-for-profits for partnering with CREW to produce this very worthwhile initiative.

Pool and Recreation – Trustee Lynn Pombonyo

Trustee Pombonyo reported that the Village pool and recreation center continue to be busy with activities for those of all ages: Luau Splash Party, Family Theme Nights, Moonlight Movies, Senior Fridays, Top Your Own Sundae, 1970's Night, Grandparents' Days and Residents' Days. These are but a few of the special events that enhance the swimming and group fitness activities that are offered on a daily basis at the pool. The recreation schedule features jazz/hip hop dance, tennis, arts and crafts, Bingo, camp experiences and others for our youth, and volleyball, basketball, tennis, aerobics, and others for the adults. And don't forget children's gardening and bird watching for all at Centennial Gardens, open daily from noon to 5:00 pm. Please refer to your Village 2019 *Pool & Recreation* book for the exciting details.

Covert Avenue Chamber of Commerce – Trustee Lynn Pombonyo

Trustee Pombonyo reminded all to SHOP AND DINE LOCALLY in Floral Park and Stewart Manor for a most enjoyable experience. All are OPEN FOR BUSINESS now and will continue to be!

Fire Department – Trustee Archie Cheng

Trustee Cheng reported that the dedication of the new Active Company Truck was held on June 30th. It was a great event. The new truck is larger than the old one and has additional interior seating space for our firefighters, a longer ladder and more storage areas for necessary equipment. Trustee Cheng said he hopes this new truck never has to be put into service for a fire call. The old truck is now out of service but will be used by the Reliance Engine Company to respond to calls with their personnel.

Fire Department calls for the month of June were: rescues 72, all other calls 29.

Third Track – Trustee Archie Cheng

Trustee Cheng said that work continues along the mainline retaining wall east of Plainfield Avenue. As residents have probably seen, there is extensive work being done at South Tyson Avenue. This work is in preparation of the new bridge that will carry the Third Track. The Village has authorized a closure of South Tyson from 6:30 am to 4:30 pm every weekday and some weekends. We have allowed the closure so that the majority of work on South Tyson can be completed by the start of the school year. The installation of the bridge will be on the weekend of August 17-18. There will be full closure that weekend and the ~~railroad~~ mainline will be shut down.

A benefit the Village did receive as a result of the Third Track Project is money received from the State for the reconstruction of Floral Boulevard. Floral Boulevard is one of the wider streets in the Village and it is problematic to reconstruct and the cost is prohibitive. Had this money not been received from the State, Floral Boulevard would have been reconstructed piecemeal, taking many years to accomplish at a very high cost.

Library – Trustee Frank Chiara

Trustee Chiara reported that the Library is participating in the Nassau County Library Tour/Scavenger Hunt. There are 52 libraries taking part, prizes are given depending on how many libraries are visited. While touring our Library, visitors are welcome to hunt for our “astronaut” dinosaur as part of the scavenger hunt. Many Nassau residents from Bellmore, North Bellmore and Plainedge, to mention a few, have already stopped in to visit our Library. Our Library staff has been receiving many compliments acknowledging how friendly and welcoming our Library is. While visiting, an information sheet is also provided encouraging the visitors to support our local businesses and visit our attractions, like Centennial Gardens. Thank you to our Library staff for all they do making our Library a great place to visit and for also promoting our wonderful Village.

The Library will be celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Woodstock by having a concert on the Library lawn. Dust off your favorite bellbottoms, love beads and tie dyes to join in celebrating this 50th Anniversary. It will happen on Thursday evening, August 15th at 7:00 pm on the lawn. Rumor has it that love beads, brownies and moonpies will be given out. Come and enjoy the still rocking music of Woodstock for our very own summer of love!! Please check the Library website for this and many other upcoming summer events. Have a safe and enjoyable summer!

Mayor’s Report – Mayor Dominick Longobardi

Mayor Longobardi said that tonight we must reluctantly accept the letter of retirement from our Superintendent of Buildings and Public Works, Stephen Siwinski. Steve has been with us for over 18 years and none of us want him to go. He has left a tremendous mark on our Village from our roads to our village buildings, residential homes, businesses, parks and trees. Steve has simultaneously held two very important positions, both the Superintendent of Buildings and the Superintendent of Public Works, and he has managed both very well. He has helped our residents and managed the assets of the Village. It will be very difficult to go forward without him. The Mayor thanked Steve’s wonderful staff and, of course, his wife, Maryann, and his daughter, Casey, for giving him to us all these years as there were many nights when he was not home. We all wish Steve health and happiness and all the best that life has to offer in the next new and exciting chapter of his life.

Trustee Fitzgerald said, simply, Floral Park is better off for Steve’s services, including his own family. He thanked Steve for imparting to him over the last eight years a tremendous amount of knowledge. Finally, Trustee Fitzgerald said Steve has always been a true gentlemen and a great colleague and wished him well in his retirement.

Trustee Pombonyo said that Steve Siwinski is a truly unique and talented professional and that she had the good fortune to sit in as liaison to the Building Department. Many residents come to the Architectural Review Board with designs and ideas for their homes. Steve would sit down with the homeowners and architects and helped improve those ideas and make them more beautiful and practical. In the end, everyone appreciated Steve’s input and the homeowner and the Village got something better. Trustee Pombonyo thanked Steve for doing so many things for our Village and for making it more beautiful.

Trustee Cheng echoed the sentiments of his fellow Board members. He said that in 2016, when he became a member of the Board of Trustees, he had to give a budget presentation on the Building Department. The budget is approximately 130 pages long and 75 pages of it was Steve's department. Trustee Cheng had no clue what to do but Steve helped him work through it. As a certified architect, Trustee Cheng said Steve taught him a lot about buildings and roads. Trustee Cheng thanked Steve for always being there to impart his vast knowledge and wished him well in his retirement. As Steve and Maryann are going on a trip to Alaska, Trustee Cheng said to be careful not to get involved in road construction there!!!

Trustee Chiara wished Steve lots of enjoyment in his retirement. During his short tenure as the current liaison to the Building Department, Trustee Chiara said Steve has been extremely helpful and professional while working together and that he greatly appreciates the knowledge he has acquired. He thanked Steve for everything he has done for him and Village residents.

Steve thanked the Mayor and Board of Trustees, both past and present, for appointing him for the last 18 years. He said it has been a pleasure to serve the Village and he hopes everyone was satisfied with his work. He wished his successor well and said that person will do just fine.